



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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BAUCUS CALLS FOR ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE REFORMS

Senator says report underscores need for a more affordable, higher quality system

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, today commented on the need to address the mounting problems facing America's health care system in light of the release of a final report by the Citizen's Health Care Working Group. Baucus responded to the report, which provides suggestions for Congress on how best to reform the health care system, by calling for attention to skyrocketing health care costs and the growing number of uninsured Americans. Baucus called for solutions to health care problems that will increase America's ability to compete in the global economy.

“This report outlines some very important issues that need our attention now. Changes are absolutely necessary to get Americans the affordable, accessible and high quality system they deserve. This report recommends improving the health care system by more effectively spending the nation's two trillion dollar health budget, and in my view the pay-for-quality approach is the right way to begin. We need to reward providers for quality of care and get the most bang for our health care buck,” said Baucus. **“This is about America's economic success as well as the health of our people. The effect of high health care costs on American companies threatens our country's ability to compete in the global economy. When we create solutions to contain health care costs and provide better quality care, we help American workers and American companies thrive as well.”**

The Citizen's Health Care Working Group was created as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act Of 2003, to spur conversation among the American people about how best to provide all Americans with quality, affordable health care coverage. The group has held community meetings across the country, including an April 2006 meeting held by Senator Baucus in Billings, MT. The Group released an interim report, The Health Report to the American People, in October 2005. The recommendations in today's report mark the final step in the mission of the group.

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